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WHICH SHALL DOMINATE—SAXON OR SLAV?

BY THE HON. DAVID MILLS, CANADIAN MINISTER OF JUSTICE.

THE question of the future position of the United States among nations, is one of great interest and importance. Shall she unite with Russia, and endeavor to put an end to Anglo-Saxon leadership in the world, or shall she join with the British Empire in giving additional strength and assured permanency to that ascendancy? For a century the United States has acted upon the advice of Washington and “avoided entangling alliances.” Apart from the Civil War, in which slavery perished, her history has been mainly a history of peace, and her condition has not differed, in any marked degree, from that of a self-governing dependency. She has now reached the point where the road parts, and circumstances are forcing her to abandon her position of isolation and to take her place among the great states of Christendom. The problems that now confront her, like those that have confronted the United Kingdom for a century, are as interesting as they are important, and the English-speaking population of the world cannot turn them aside and refuse to give them careful consideration.

Providence seldom lifts the mists which lie in the pathways of states. It seldom permits them to see clearly what lies before them; but there are laws of national growth that deserve careful study, and which, when understood, point, with moderate accuracy, the direction in which both the duty and the interests of a state lie. Sometimes the state’s rulers are driven on to conflict by the force of public opinion, and when they undertake to assign the reasons they find them, as justifying causes, wholly inadequate. It may be that a state is losing its moral fibre. It may be that it has not the courage to resist popular clamor. It may be that there is an instinctive feeling prevalent, that hostili-

ties are necessary in order to escape greater evils. A state may have been called upon to endure no trials, to surmount no difficulties, to make no sacrifices. There is nothing in its political life to awaken noble aspirations. A low feeling of self interest has taken the place of a high sense of public duty, and war may prove to be the only adequate remedy for the political disease. It may prove the most appropriate means for restoring the moral health of the nation, and for impressing upon both the government and the people, nobler ideas of what, as a nation, they are in the world for, than they have hitherto entertained.

"There is a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will."

The growth of states is always a subject of profound interest. The Anglo-Saxon whose mind has not been perverted by prejudice, feels a pride in the fact that he is an Anglo-Saxon—one of a race that for two hundred years has held the first place in the march of humanity. He naturally observes, with interest, those who are treading immediately in the rear, and who are obviously striving to supplant the race to which he belongs, and he cannot well do otherwise than consider the conditions upon which he holds the first place. He is forced to ask himself whether the end of his leadership is approaching; whether he has fulfilled his mission; and whether the standard, which he has long carried, is soon to be wrested from him? Are we, as a race, to be called upon to yield to the Slav the place which we hold, because we are no longer qualified to retain it? Is our race sinking into a condition of lethargy because its energies are spent, and its moral fibre gone? Have we become weary with our constant struggle to overcome difficulties, and in our efforts have we lost the capacity, any longer, to lead?

Analogies have often been instituted between states and persons. It is said that they have alike their period of infancy, of growth, of maturity, and of decay. This, no doubt, has hitherto been so; but is it, equally, a necessary condition in each? Mr. Burke says that the analogy between states and individuals is misleading. They do not belong to the same order of being. States are not physical but moral persons, and are not subject to the same vicissitudes. The fact, however, remains that the world has seen a succession of leading states which have risen to greatness, attained the first place, and have themselves been sub-

jugated and forced to yield to some other state, which has, in turn, sunk into decrepitude.

This succession of great states as leaders of the world has also been a succession of distinct races, and their history may be summarized by saying that they have risen from obscurity to a controlling place; they have led humanity a certain distance; each has spread itself abroad by the force of arms; each has imposed its thoughts and habits upon the world, has exhausted its energies in the operation, and has finally had its place wrested from it by the superior energy of another race. I take it for granted, because I think it is demonstrated in history, that there is a Divine purpose in the relative condition of states, and that the status of each is mainly dependent upon the courage and the moral vigor of its people; that high character is of more value than mere numbers; and that states do not perish that deserve to survive.

I think it is equally true, moreover, that the nations and races which have led the world were called to represent a distinct group of ideas which were essential to the progress of mankind. It may well be that the lessons which it was necessary that men should learn were too difficult to be all learned at once, and so different races became the repositories of different types of thought; that the world was broken into classes, and each group had assigned to it its own appropriate lesson, until all should be mastered. The order of events, in the lives of great states, must be one of real progression, an order which has, so far, had a beginning, a middle, and an end; and when that end is reached, its life seems rounded off and completed. I am not asserting that everything a state does is a necessary part of the controlling thought which it embodies. It may make mistakes, and these mistakes may hinder and delay its progress; but they are only perturbing influences which, though rendering it unsteady in the course in which it marches, cannot change the general direction of the currents in which its energies flow. A careful study of the history of every great state will always enable us to estimate correctly those influences, and to ascertain the precise purpose which those forces serve by which it is impelled onward. It has been well said by M. Cousin, that the whole history of a state is wrapped up in the ideas which it represents. When these are completely

developed its work is done. It can no longer move forward, its impelling force is exhausted, its journey is at an end. Where a nation has still progressive life and energy, the institutions which it has outgrown are certain to produce friction, and they must either be destroyed, or modified so as to meet the new condition of things. When a people have spent their force, there is first rest, then decay, and finally disintegration.

When a state is struggling to the front, it has a personality of its own. It is the exponent of new types of thought, of new notions of human well being, and even when its mission is completed, it does not sink into a secondary place without a struggle. "War," says M. Cousin, "is but the bloody exchange of ideas." It is the triumph of the race that brings with it the treasures of the future, over the race that has nothing further to bestow. The great events which serve to exalt one state and debase another, are but "the judgments of God in history." Men sometimes sympathize with a fallen state, not because the state itself deserves that sympathy, but because, to the last, there are among those who stand up for it some who continue to exhibit, in their own persons, its departed excellence.

Is it not possible that a state may continue to possess habits of simple virtue and unwearied energy, so as to keep itself indefinitely in the lead of human progress?

The Anglo-Saxon, in the history of the world, occupies a unique position. He has spread over the world far beyond the limits reached by any of the races that have preceded him. His environment is universal. He is not only placed in new geographical circumstances, but he is everywhere brought in contact with new races whose excellence he is incorporating into his own life. It may be that this may give to the ascendancy of the Anglo-Saxon new centers of influence, which will serve to impart to him new life and energy, and thus protect him against the disasters which have overtaken the masters that have gone before him. It never can be too well remembered by statesmen, and by all who wish well to their race, that without moral stamina, without public virtue and public spirit, without self-sacrifice, it is impossible to retain the front rank, as it would have been impossible without these to achieve that position. A race that does not continue to possess these qualities, in the very highest degree, is doomed to failure.

It is important, too, to bear in mind that these qualities are not absolute but relative ; and as those that are in the rear grow in moral strength, they can be retained in that position only by a corresponding growth in those marching in the front.

It is impossible within the limit prescribed to a magazine article to set forth clearly what the people and government of the United Kingdom have gained, in this respect, by what they have accomplished. In Egypt, in the Soudan, upon the Niger, in South Africa, in India, and elsewhere, the people of the United Kingdom are, by their energy and enterprise, gaining in the moral elevation of character, and in the wider and juster view which they are acquiring in respect to their relation to other races with which they have been brought in contact, qualities necessary to keep them to the front. There are millions brought under the dominion of law. Life is rendered more secure. The humble laborer has assured to him the fruit of his toil. Whole nations are, from time to time, rescued from murderous and debasing rites, and millions are living in peace and domestic quiet, over vast areas where before these blessings were wholly unknown. British commerce, it is true, is being extended. That is the reward Providence bestows for the service performed. Regions that were before little better than deserts, in which one class of men were engaged in hunting another class, have gained the blessings of peace, and are laying the foundations of trade. The United Kingdom is doing for large sections of the earth what the inhabitants of the United States are doing, in another way, in that portion of North America over which they have for a century exercised dominion.

It is sometimes asked, How can Russia be a menace ? Does she threaten Anglo-Saxon civilization ? Is she seeking, for herself, the first place among nations ? Let us look at the situation. The sovereignty over a large part of the earth's surface is held by three races : the Spaniards, the English, and the Russians. The Spaniards are of the Latin race, and the supremacy which they once held may be regarded as a short revival, after a long interval, of ancient Rome. I leave, in the consideration of this question, France and Germany out of view. They have already reached the maximum of greatness which their conditions allow. The French no longer go forth to colonize. The emigration

from France does not much exceed 5,000 a year. Though France may conquer, she cannot colonize. Germany has, in recent years, acquired extensive possessions, but they are in regions where, for the most part, her own people cannot settle, and so, like France, she can only revive a colonial policy of a past age, and shut the gates of commerce in the face of other states. For this reason I leave out of the question both Germany and France, as powers whose seat of empire must remain in Europe, and who can never hereafter be other than subordinate factors in any struggle for supremacy. Spain, though a fallen empire, is in a different position. Nearly 5,000,000 of square miles on this continent are under the dominion of Spaniards. True, the inhabitants are not all of the Spanish race, but Spaniards are the dominant race in all the republics which have sprung from her American possessions. The language, the literature, the religion, and the habits of thought are all Spanish, and to-day the Spanish language is more widely diffused over the world than any other European tongue, the English alone excepted. Though Spain has fallen, indeed, very low, she still possesses some elements of her former greatness which command respect, and there are, here and there, indications, in some of the states which have sprung from her loins, that they are beginning to awake from their lethargy, and to devote themselves to objects more worthy the ambition of their statesmen, than to struggle for first place in revolutionary governments.

It may well be that the results of the present conflict between Spain and the United States may serve to draw Spain and the Spanish-American states into some sort of alliance, and especially is it likely to do so if Spain should become a republic. Among the independent states of Spanish America, the feeling toward the United States has undergone great change. Early in the century, when the Monroe doctrine was originally promulgated, these peoples were seeking protection against Spain, and against the Holy Alliance. They welcomed the promised aid of Monroe and of Canning. They felt that the sympathy and protection of the United States was necessary to secure them against European aggression. The modern Monroe doctrine is a practical denial of the sovereignty of every state to which it is extended, and so it is, everywhere in Spanish America, passively resented. It is

regarded as a denial, under International Law, of the equality of states and without being a source of strength to the United States on this continent, it may greatly cripple her freedom of action elsewhere.

It has been said that Russia is the political ally of the United States, that the United Kingdom is her hereditary enemy, and that she ought not to throw away the good will of an ancient friend for the support of an ancient enemy. It is argued that the United Kingdom would never seek an alliance with the United States that was not to her own advantage. That may be so, but let us consider this view with more care. Few states have ever sought an alliance that was not believed to be advantageous, either because of the good which it might bring, or of the evil which it might prevent. If it were not advantageous, it would not be sought, and unless it were mutually advantageous, it could not endure, though consummated by the most solemn and formal agreement.

But let us examine closely for a moment the supposed friendship of Russia for the United States. It is not—it cannot be—other than mere words. States do not differ that are never brought in contact, and where there is no contact there is no rivalry, and professions of friendship may do no harm, and can do little good. But what is there between the United States and Russia, in common, that can make them allies? Russia aims at two things—to prevent an Anglo-American Alliance, and to prevent the United States from ever acquiring any voice in the direction of affairs in the Far East. The policy of Russia was not matured in a day. Russia did not withdraw from America until she had possession of the Lower Amour, until she had awakened the fears of Japan, had taken possession of one of her islands and had driven her into the family of nations, where Japan hoped she might find allies among civilized states. Russia intended that the Monroe doctrine should effectually estop the United States from having any voice in the settlement of any Asiatic question. She may say: “You can no more acquire by conquest the Philippine Islands, than Russia or France can acquire Cuba.” Russia withdrew from Alaska for two reasons—to exclude the United States from having any voice in respect to questions touching the eastern shore of Asia; and to prevent Alaska, in case any future conflict with the

United Kingdom should arise, from becoming a part of British America, and it was so understood at the time by every Japanese statesman.

Let us consider the aims of Russia, as shown by what she has attempted and accomplished in modern times. The Russian statesman loves conquest. With him it is a habit of mind. Russia is a great Asiatic power, employing the resources of western civilization to further her ambitious designs. Her conquests are not the outcome of industrial enterprise. They have not sprung from the necessities of commerce. Her acquisitions have not arisen from a desire to find a profitable investment for her capital. They are due entirely to a love of dominion. In the last century, she acquired all the territory lying between her western border, and the Gulf of Bothnia and the Baltic Sea. She acquired the greater part of Poland and the whole of Crim-Tartary. In this century she has obtained Finland from Sweden, Bessarabia, and a part of Armenia, from Turkey. She has acquired the Caucasus, Georgia, several Provinces of Persia, and the whole country from the Caspian Sea, on the west, to the borders of China, on the east, including Samarcand, Bokhara, Khiva and Merv, besides a large section of north-eastern China. Russia is the one great state of the world that pays no regard to her Treaty obligations longer than it is convenient for her to do so. Her territories cover an area nearly three times as large as the United States, and are being constantly extended. If she finds resistance, at any point, upon her borders, she rests there, and pushes forward her boundaries, where those upon whom she encroaches are not prepared to stay her march. What she acquires is hers absolutely, the trade of the people, no less than her dominion over them. Not the slightest reliance can be put upon her promises. She regards falsehood as a legitimate weapon in diplomacy, as deceit is in war. In Afghanistan, which she declared to be outside of the sphere of Russian diplomacy, and within the sphere of the diplomacy of England, she carried on constant intrigues against English authority. Her representatives sought to stir up rebellion. She endeavored to obtain the consent of its rulers for the construction of a road that would lead to India, and for the purchase of supplies that would support an army of invasion on their march. She never gives up any pur-

pose which she has once formed. More than eight centuries ago she marched an army of 80,000 men to conquer the Byzantine Empire, and to seize Constantinople. What she then undertook and failed to accomplish, she has never abandoned. It has been from time to time postponed for a more fitting opportunity. She lost six great armies in the march from the Caspian to Samarcand, and two centuries elapsed from the time when she contemplated this conquest before it was consummated. If the Russian Empire holds together, she counts on the conquest of Turkey, of Persia, of India, and of China.

If Russia succeeds in the task to which she has set herself she will hold seventeen millions of square miles of territory, and she will have under her dominion nine hundred millions of people. The fall of the British Empire is regarded by Russian statesmen as essential to the realization of her hopes. Let me ask what would be the position of the world, with so much territory and so many people under one ruler, wielding the power necessary to the realization of his wishes. It is only necessary to study the commercial and industrial policy of Russia to discover that she would trample into the earth every people that might aspire to better their position or to become in any way her rivals. In every department of commerce, and in every field in which greatness might be achieved, her rulers would regard any attempt at success as an attack upon her supremacy.

In the discussion of this question I embrace the United States as a part of the Anglo-Saxon community. I do so because in the present position of the race, and of the work which obviously lies before it, the loss of British supremacy in the world would be scarcely less disastrous to the United States than it would be to the British Empire. It is true that the United States, under the present order of things, has room for further expansion. But the present order of things rests upon Anglo-Saxon supremacy. Even within her existing limits, she may grow for many years to come; and if Turkey, Persia, India, and China were added to the Empire of Russia, the whole position of the world would be completely changed; the condition of things on this continent would be revolutionized. With the power thus centred under Russian control and directed from St. Petersburg, with the Valley of the Euphrates occupied by Russians devoted to agriculture, with the frontiers of that mighty Empire resting upon

the Indian Ocean, and with the whole commerce of Asia in her possession, Russia would, as a natural consequence of these tremendous additions, become the dominant sea power. The Pacific Ocean would be a Russian Lake, and her eastern frontiers would rest upon the western shore of North America. The British Islands would rapidly diminish in population, until the number of inhabitants would be such as the product of the soil would naturally support. The United Kingdom could no longer be a market for the bread-stuffs of this continent, and European immigration to America would cease. Russia would rapidly grow in wealth and in population, but no country in the Western Hemisphere would do either ; for the great markets of the world would be in the possession of a power that would use them to cripple the commerce of any state which would, in any degree, aspire to become her rival.

In the highest sense the United States has not, and cannot have, an independent existence. Her fortune is inseparably associated with the race to which she belongs, in which her future is wrapt up, and in which she lives and moves and has her being. The unity between the United States and the British Empire is a matter both of race and growth. They touch each other, and as peoples unite and great states rise, they must be, for all great international purposes, one people. They are parts of the same race, whose extension is being pushed more and more rapidly forward by the sleepless energy of individual men, under the protection of the United Kingdom, into barbarous regions where they are acquiring new standing room for the formation of new states. In science, in literature, in government, in religion, in industrial pursuits, and in the conception of human rights and of human duties, they are one people, having common aims, a common origin, and from their necessary relations a common destiny.

The very forces which would establish Russian ascendancy over the United Kingdom would in an incredibly short time establish Russian ascendancy in America, in South Africa, and in Australia. The leadership of the Saxon would be at an end and that of the Slav would be begun. It is impossible to follow the course of Russian diplomacy, without seeing that Russia aspires to the possession of all Asia. The aims of Russia concern not only the people of the United Kingdom, but the

English-speaking people everywhere. Russia was, at one time, overrun by Tartars. She long felt their iron hand of government. They were incorporated with the Slavonic population, and they have impressed themselves in a large degree upon the Russian nation; so that, in their mental make-up, the Russians are quite as much Asiatic as European. Their conceptions of government are Asiatic, and citizens of the United States who advocate a Russian alliance, rather than an alliance with those of their own kin, can never have seriously considered the objects and aims of Russia as a political force in the world.

This, then, is not a question between England and Russia, but it is a question between Saxon and Slav. The danger is a danger not to one state, but to the race to which we all belong. This danger is due to many causes, and among them not the least is the tendency of democratic institutions, which are a marked characteristic of our Saxon civilization. The dangers which spring from this source are not always apparent; and men who toil, and do battle with want, are seldom in a mood to make great sacrifices to ward off perils which they do not think imminent. It is easy to conceive that, in a period of distress, there are millions of freemen, in the British Empire and in the United States, who think only of questions of local and domestic reform. They have before their minds those changes in government which they think will increase their comforts and will relieve them from the evils that are pressing upon them. They refuse to see the consequences which spring from the relations of states. They are not willing to submit to burdens which the struggles for empire may impose, though the statesman sees that what the masses possess can only be retained by a triumph over the larger danger which threatens.

The interests of the world call for Anglo-Saxon alliance. Let not the British Empire and the United States revive, after the lapse of centuries, the old contest of Judah and Ephraim; but, remembering that their interests are one, as the race is one, let them stand together, to maintain the ascendancy which they will hold as long as Providence fits them to lead; which will be as long as, in their dealings with those beneath them, they are actuated by principles of justice and truth.

DAVID MILLS.